

Jack. Cecily! What on earth do you mean? What do you mean, Algy, by Cecily! I don't know any one of the name of Cecily. *[Enter*

Lane.

Algernon. Bring me that cigarette case Mr. Worthing left in the smoking-room the last time he dined here.

Lane. Yes, sir. *[Lane goes out.]*

Jack*. Do you mean to say you have had my cigarette case all this time? I wish to goodness you had let me know. I have been writing frantic letters to Scotland Yard about it. I was very nearly offering a large reward.

Algernon. Well, I wish you would offer one. I happen to be more than usually hard up.

Jack. There is no good offering a large reward now that the thing is found.

[Enter Lane with the cigarette case on a salver.]

Algernon

takes it at once. *Lane goes out.*

Algernon. I think that is rather mean of you, Ernest, I must say. *[Opens case and examines it.]* However, it makes no matter, for, now that I look at the inscription inside, I find that the thing isn't yours after all.

Jack. Of course it's mine. *[Moving to him.]* You have seen me with it a hundred times, and you have no right whatsoever to read what is written inside. It is a very ungentlemanly thing to read a private cigarette case.

Algernon. Oh! it is absurd to have a hard and fast rule about what one should read and what one shouldn't. More than half of modern culture depends on what one shouldn't read.

Jack. I am quite aware of the fact, and I don't propose to discuss modern culture. It isn't the sort of thing one should talk of in private. I simply want my cigarette case back.

Algernon. Yes; but this isn't your cigarette case.

This cigarette case is a present from some one of the name of Cecily, and

you said you didn't know any one of that name. Jack. Well, if you want to know, Cecily happens to be my aunt.

Algernon. Your aunt?

Jack. Yes. Charming old lady she is, too. Lives at Tunbridge

Wells. Just give it back to me, Algy.

Algernon. *[Retreating to back of sofa.]* But why does she call herself little Cecily if she is your aunt and lives at Tunbridge Wells? *[Reading.]* "From little Cecily with her fondest love."

Jack. *[Moving to sofa and kneeling upon it.]* My dear fellow, what on earth is there in that? Some aunts are tall, some